

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 02397 240908Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 53
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2397

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, US, KS, JA
SUBJ: US-ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH
ASSEMBLYMAN MUN HYONG-TAE

REF: A) 77 SEOUL 356, B) TOKYO 3833, C) SEOUL 2358

1. REP MUN HYONG TAE, A FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE ROK, JCS,
AND REP RHEE SEONG KEUN CALLED ON ME ON THE MORNING OF MARCH
24 TO REPORT ON THEIR VISIT TO JAPAN MARCH 8-15, PURPOSE OF
FIVE-MAN ASSEMBLY GROUP WHICH VISITED JAPAN WAS TO MEET WITH
LDP DIET MEMBERS (AND TWO FROM DSP) TO DISCUSS SECURITY
AFFAIRS. MUN SAID GROUP HAD MET WITH MANY (70) LDP OLD
GUARD, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER, AND OTHERS
IN THE LEADERSHIP. WHILE NOT MUCH NEW RESULTED, I WAS STRUCK
BY THE SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE IMPRESSION OF THE US CONTAINED IN
COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE JAPANESE SIDE. MUN'S REPORT ON
HIS ACTIVITIES THUS TOOK NOW SOMEWHAT THE COLORATION OF TELLING
TALES OUT OF SCHOOL.

2. REGARDING PROPOSED SECURITY DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN CONGRESSIONAL
GROUPS (REF C) IN US, ROK AND JAPAN, MUN SAID DIET WOULD
NOT APPROVE SUCH A GROUPING AND THUS HOPE WAS TO PLACE EX-
CHANGE ON A PARTY TO PARTY BASIS. HE INDICATED THAT THERE
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MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO BE GAINED BY ROK IN THIS TYPE OF
AN EXCHANGE WHICH WOULD BUILD UPON EXISTING JAPANESE/US
DISCUSSIONS. I POINTED OUT TO MUN THAT US CONGRESS
MOVED SLOWLY ON ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH RELATIONS AND WAS
NORMALLY RELUCTANT TO UNDERTAKE THEM. I FURTHER POINTED
OUT THE DANGER OF KOREA USING JAPAN OR JAPANESE PARLIAMENTARY
GROUP TO PUT FORWARD ITS VIEWS IN THE US. I URGED THAT EFFORTS

WITH JAPAN BE DIRECTED TOWARD IMPROVEMENT IN THE
BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AND THAT RELATIONS WITH THE US CONTINUE,
AS IN THE PAST, TO BE MAINLY BILATERAL.

3. MUN NOTED LDP HOPES FOR EARLY CONCLUSION OF PFT WITH
PRC. IN THIS RESPECT HE SAID DRIVING FORCE WAS ECONOMIC
AND JAPANESE APPEARED CONCERNED US WOULD NORMALIZE
RELATIONS WITH PRC AND CUT INTO THE MARKET. JAPANESE
COLLEAGUES HAD URGED THAT KOREANS COOPERATE WITH JAPAN
IN PRC TRADE DEVELOPMENT AND NOT ACT AS ADVANCED BASE
FOR US EFFORTS. I TOLD MUN THAT THE US DID NOT INVOLVE
ITSELF IN JAPAN/PRC MATTERS AND LIKEWISE JAPAN DID NOT
BECOME INVOLVED IN US/PRC RELATIONS WITH RESPECT TO
TRADE, I ASSURED HIM THA THE US WOULD INDEED HOPE TO
COMPETE IN PRC MARKET WHEN CONDITIONS WERE APPROPRIATE.
I CAUTIONED AGAINST KOREA BECOMING THE TAIL ON
ANYONES TRADE KITE AND SUGGESTED THAT KOREAN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MIGHT BE OF GROWING CONCERN
TO JAPAN IN THE ASIAN MARKET.

4. MUN STATED THAT PART OF THE DISCUSSION IN JAPAN
HAD REVOLVED AROUND NUCLEAR ARMS AND THE RECENT
STATEMENT THAT SUCH ARMS NOT RULED OUT JAPANESE
CONSTITUION. I TOOK THE OPENING THUS OFFERED TO
DELIVER A SMALL LECTURE ON THE DANGER OF JAPAN OR KOREA
MOVING INTO THE NUCLEAR ARMS FIELD. I STRESSED THAT
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SUCH WAS UNNECESSARY GIVEN THE US NUCLEAR UMBRELLA
AND WOULD EVOKE A STRONG REACTION FROM BOTH EAST AND
WEST. MUN APPEARED IMPRESSED WITH THE VISOR OF THIS
RESPONSE AND, HOPEFULLY, WILL ONCE MORE CARRY BOTH MY
MESSAGES TO HIS COLLEAGUES.

5. MUN STATED JAPANESE WORRIED OVER RUSSIAN BUILDUP
AND POSSIBLE DRIFT OF INDONESIA. I ASSURED HIM THAT
US CONTINUED ACTIVE INTEREST IN INDONESIA AND DIS-
COUNTED POSSIBILITY OF NEW RUSSIAN INIATIVE THERE.

6. FINALLY THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT TO PYONGYANG
BY HU'A QUO FENG WAS ALSO DISCUSSED. I NOTED THAT WE
HAD SEEN ONLY PRESS SPECULATION ON THIS TRIP AND
EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT, IF PAST EXPERIENCE WAS ANY
INDICATOR, HUA WOULD MOST PROBABLY URGE A MORE CONSERVATIVE,
LESS MILITARISTIC POLICY ON KIM IL-SUNG.
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